

# Taryn Simon

## An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar

Feb 16 — Mar 15, 2008 | Paris

For this project, artist Taryn Simon assumes the dual role of shrewd informant and collector of curiosities, compiling an inventory of what lies hidden and out-of-view within the borders of the United States. She examines a culture through careful documentation of diverse subjects from the realms of science, government, medicine, entertainment, nature, security, and religion. Transforming the unknown into a seductive and intelligible form, Simon confronts the divide between those with and without the privilege of access. Her sometimes ethereal, sometimes foreboding compositions, shot with a large-format view camera whenever conditions allowed, vary as much as her subject matter, which ranges from radioactive capsules at a nuclear waste storage facility to a black bear in hibernation. Offering visions of the unseen, the photographs of *An American Index* capture the strange magic at the foundation of a national identity.

Taryn Simon was born in New York in 1975. She is a graduate of Brown University and a Guggenheim Fellow. Her influential project, *The Innocents*, documents cases of wrongful conviction in the United States and investigates photography's role in that process. Simon's photographs have been exhibited nationally and internationally, including solo shows at: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; and Museum für Moderne Kunst (MMK), Frankfurt/Main. Her photography and writing have been featured in numerous publications and broadcasts including The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, CNN, BBC, Frontline, and NPR.

*An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar*, is published by Steidl and includes a foreword by Salman Rushdie, introduction by Elizabeth Sussman and Tina Kukielski and commentary by Ronald Dworkin.